

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending. The title has been amended. No new matter has been presented.

The title was objected to for not being descriptive. The title has been amended, and withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 7, 11 and 13-14 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Ohnishi, U.S. Patent 3,932,877. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 11 recite “at least one of said discharging electrode, said stabilizer plate and said grid is made of an electrically conductive material containing 30 % or more of nickel by weight.” Thus, referring to Fig. 2, at least one of element 21, 22 or 23 is made of an electrically conductive material containing 30 % or more of nickel by weight. Ohnishi fails to disclose or suggest this feature.

The Examiner asserts that Ohnishi teaches a grid made of nickel and that “the grid has the Young’s modulus of nickel” (citing col. 5, lines 24-31). Although Ohnishi does disclose that element 15 (a mesh electrode) can be made of nickel, Ohnishi fails to teach or suggest that the electrically conductive material of the mesh electrode 15 contains 30 % or more of nickel by weight. More precisely, although Ohnishi states that the mesh electrode can be made of copper, stainless steel, nickel or the like, that is the only reference to the composition of the mesh electrode, except for col. 5, lines 62-65, where Ohnishi states “an electrode 15 of 50 to 200 mesh may be used in view of ion transmissivity, ability to shield the corona electric field, and ease of manufacture.” However, this is not equivalent to the claimed 30 % or more of nickel by weight. Thus, Ohnishi fails to teach or suggest the features of claim 1 and claim 11.

Claims 3, 7, 13 and 14 are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 8 and 18 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Reale, U.S. Patent 4,920,266. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 8 and 18 recite “at least one member of said discharging electrode, said stabilizer plate and said grid is plated with nickel or platinum at a rate from 30 % to 80 % by weight with respect to whole weight of the plated member.” Reale fails to teach or suggest this feature.

Reale teaches that a coating composition of the screen includes powdered nickel and is believed to have about 21 % solids content containing by weight about 36 % nickel (col. 11, lines 37-42). However, this is not equivalent to stating that the stabilizer plate is coated with nickel at a rate of 30 % to 80 % by weight *with respect to whole weight of the plated member*. Thus, Reale fails to teach or suggest the features of claims 8 and 18. Accordingly, Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772034900.

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Respectfully submitted,

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